

HINDU SENIOR CITIZENS OF SOUTH JERSEY, Inc.

BY-LAWS

Chapter I: INTRODUCTION

Hindu Senior Citizens of South Jersey shall be a nonprofit, charitable, and voluntary organization. Its registered office shall be Hindu Temple, India Temple Association, 25 E. Taunton Ave., Berlin, New Jersey, 08009 USA. Its mission shall be the support, recreation, and wellbeing of the seniors, and to obtain government support for their wellbeing/welfare.

Chapter II: MEMBERSHIP

A. Qualification of Members

1. Membership shall be open to Hindu senior citizens irrespective of gender, language spoken, marital status, or national origin.
2. “Senior citizens” shall include elderly persons who are citizens and permanent residents of USA, and others lawfully admitted in U.S.A.
3. A Hindu is defined as an adherent of Hinduism (*SANATAN DHARMA*)—a complex body of religious faiths, beliefs, teachings & rituals, cultural practices and social customs. The term Hindus shall include all practicing Hindus, Buddhists, Jains and Sikhs.
4. Membership shall be of two classes:
 - a. Full Members: Those 60 years of age or older; spouses may be younger.
 - b. Associate Members: Those 50 to 59 years of age; spouses may be younger.
5. A person wishing to become a member shall do so by completing a membership form and paying membership dues.

B. Rights and Limitations of the Different Classes of Members

1. Full and Associate members shall enjoy all the benefits of membership, such as voting, as well as taking part in religious, cultural, social, educational, and other activities.
2. Only the Full members shall be elected to the executive council.

C. Membership Form

1. Membership Forms shall contain pertinent biographical details of members.

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2. Membership Forms shall be available cost-free from the executive council members, as well from our website - www.hinduseniors.com.

D. Membership Dues (Non-Refundable)

1. The annual membership dues (January 1 through December 31) shall be \$10/ per person (exceptional cases only). Life Membership dues shall be \$50 per person. The dues may be changed by two-third majority of the General Body. At least seventy members present and voting, shall satisfy the quorum.

E. Suspension/Termination of membership

1. A member may be suspended/ terminated by the executive council if his/her presence is deemed disruptive to the organization.
2. A two-third majority of the Executive Council shall be required to suspend/terminate a member.

Chapter III: GENERAL BODY

1. All members of the organization shall collectively constitute the **General Body**.
2. It shall be the supreme authority of Hindu Senior Citizens of South Jersey, Inc.
3. It shall transact policy matters and review the activities of the organization.
4. It shall have powers to amend the constitution (See Chapter V.A.).
5. It shall have powers to amend the By-laws (See Chapter V.B.).
6. It shall have powers to elect and remove members of the Executive Council (See Chapter IV.D.).
7. It shall have authority to determine membership dues (See Chapter II.D.).
8. It shall have powers to dissolve the organization (See Chapter VI.).
9. The General Body may be polled by mail, email, casting of votes by a ballot, or by raising hands at its meetings, provided the quorum requirements (as specified in various Chapters) are met. All decisions reached shall be deemed to have been transacted by the General Body.

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Chapter IV: EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

A. Term:

1. The **Executive Council** shall have a term of two years and shall assume office in January. .
2. No person shall hold the same office for more than two terms (i.e., a total of four years).
3. Only the Full Members shall be office bearers of the Executive Council.

B. Elections:

1. The President shall be elected at the General Body meeting in the month of November every alternate year
2. Two months before the elections, the existing Executive Council shall appoint two Full members (outside of the executive council) as **Conveners** to conduct the elections.
3. The Conveners shall announce the date of the elections and seek nominations for the post of the President.
4. For a valid nomination, any member may propose a Full member as a nominee for the post of President; this shall be followed by seconding by another member, and finally acceptance by the candidate.
5. On the day of the elections in November, the Conveners shall also seek additional nominations from the floor for the post of the President.
6. Any nominee, if he/she so wishes, may withdraw his/her name before the voting starts.
7. The Conveners shall conduct the election for the post of the President in an orderly manner.
8. If there were more than one nomination for a post, the winner shall be decided by voting.
9. Before the start of the voting for any post, all the candidates for the post shall leave the election room.
10. Voting shall be by raising one hand in favor of a nominee. The voters, who voted for one candidate, may be separated, if needed, before starting the voting for the next candidate. The vote can be cast by a ballot or by email on the discretion of the Conveners.
11. The law of one vote-one member shall be the rule. No one shall vote for more than one candidate for any post. If one does, his/her vote shall be considered invalid.

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12. The Conveners shall count the votes for each nominee and announce the total votes counted for each nominee. They shall proceed thus until the election is completed.
13. The Conveners shall tabulate the results and announce the results of the elections.
14. In the event of a tie in any election, the Conveners shall have a deciding vote to declare the winner. The decisions of the Conveners shall be final. There shall be no appeal.
15. The members of the Executive Council shall be nominated by the President-elect, who will choose his or her nominees from different sections of the general body. Though the President-elect will have an opportunity to defend his/her selection of the proposed nominees, the General Body's majority vote will have the final say in matters of final selection and election. A quorum shall consist of a minimum of seventy members.

C. Filling a vacancy:

1. A vacancy may arise when a member of the Executive Council voluntarily relinquishes the post, is incapacitated, dies, or is removed from the office.
2. In the case of a vacancy for a post of the Executive Council, the President will nominate his/her choice and the General Body will approve the nomination with a quorum consisting of at least seventy members.

D. Removal from Office:

1. A situation may arise when a member of the Executive Council fails to perform his/her duties faithfully, violates moral codes of conduct, or violates laws of the land, that removal from the office becomes imperative.
2. Under such an unfortunate situation, a member of the Executive Council may be removed from his/her office by a two-third majority of the General Body. A quorum shall consist of seventy members.

E. Composition of the Executive Council:

The Executive Council shall consist of the following eight office bearers:

- a. President
- b. Vice-President
- c. Secretary, Proceedings & Records
- d. Secretary, Funds & Audits (Treasurer)
- e. Secretary, Food & Nutrition Programs
- f. Secretary, Excursion Programs
- g. Secretary, Web-site & E-Commerce

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h. Secretary, Communications and Event Support

The duties of each of the posts of the Executive Council are given below:

a. The President:

1. The **President** shall preside over the meetings of the executive council as well as the general body and shall provide direction.
2. Shall maintain the status of the organization as a non-profit organization, be the custodian of government certificates/ documents and be responsible for filing documents to the government.
3. Shall maintain control on finances and the budget.
4. Shall endeavor to obtain tax-exempt status for the organization.
5. Shall be responsible for the fund drive and public relations.

b. The Vice President:

1. Shall, in the absence or incapacity of the President, perform the duties of the President.
2. Shall assist the President in his executive duties, as needed.
3. Shall provide general guidance to various programs.

c. Secretary, Proceedings and Records:

The **Secretary, Proceedings & Records** shall have a Deputy Secretary who shall be a volunteer or chosen by the Secretary to assist him/her.

1. Shall record the minutes of the meetings of the executive council and the general body.
2. Shall maintain a copy of the minutes to the file as a permanent record and also provide a copy each to the President and the Vice-President.
3. Shall provide a brief review of these meetings to the general body (as Old Business), on a regular basis.
4. Shall receive and send correspondence on behalf of the association.
5. Shall inform members about future meetings.
6. Shall maintain membership list current, in file.

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d. Secretary, Funds and Audits (Treasurer):

The **Secretary, Funds & Audits** shall have a Deputy Secretary who shall be a volunteer or chosen by the Secretary to assist him/her.

1. Shall maintain a record of donations of money, other receivables and membership dues.
2. Shall deposit the funds received into bank account(s) in a timely fashion.
3. Shall maintain the funds in bank account(s) under the dual (either/or) signatures of the President and the Vice-President.
4. Shall also maintain a petty cash account of \$100 or less for emergencies.
5. Shall maintain a file of bank statements as well as bank deposit/ withdrawal slips, and maintain the Account Registers current and up to date.
6. Shall obtain approvals for expenditures as follows:
 - (a) Up to \$250 – by the Vice President;
 - (b) \$251 and above - by the President, and shall sign checks along with the President/Vice President as the case may be.
7. Shall report on the general financial health of the association at the general body meetings.
8. Shall arrange the audits of the ledger books (income and expenditure) in a timely manner at least once a year and shall present the audit report to the General Body.

e. Secretary, Food & Nutrition Programs:

Note:

Hindu Senior Citizens are mostly lacto-vegetarians. Vegetarianism is a healthy life style and there is a sizeable population of vegetarians in USA. There are federal/state nutrition programs serving each county where meals are served to seniors five times a week on a nominal payment. The meals served are, however, non-vegetarian i.e., the main dish is always meat-based. This excludes the participation of Hindus. The organization needs to work hard for arranging vegetarian meals for the seniors.

The **Secretary, Foods & Nutrition** shall be assisted by a Deputy Secretary who shall be a volunteer or chosen by the Secretary.

1. Shall arrange vegetarian meals to seniors at the ITA Hindu Temple site, beginning with a monthly/biweekly schedule.

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2. Shall seek dinner sponsors from amongst the members and other supporters in the community.
3. Shall arrange lectures from nutritionists, dieticians and other health professionals on wholesome and nutritious foods.
4. Shall arrange demonstrations from chefs and other talented cooks of delicious senior meals.
5. Shall arrange other nutrition-related activities at the Hindu Temple, as needed.

f. Secretary, Excursion Programs:

The **Secretary, Excursion** shall be assisted by a Deputy Secretary who shall be a volunteer or chosen by the Secretary.

1. Shall prepare a directory of temples in various states preferably within 200 miles zone from the Berlin Hindu Temple, develop personal contacts with the priests and managing bodies, and record phone numbers, and obtain travel maps/directions. The Secretary shall keep a permanent record of these activities for future use.
2. Shall prepare a directory of other senior Hindu organizations with similar aims and objectives as ours, develop personal contacts with their executives, record their phone numbers and obtain travel maps/directions. The Secretary shall keep a permanent record of these activities for future use.
3. Shall arrange visits of senior citizens to the sites of interest and shall maintain proper accounts for audit.
4. Shall endeavor to invite senior groups from those with whom contacts were developed and shall coordinate such visits with the executive council.
5. Shall endeavor to arrange visits to the senior groups contacted and shall maintain proper accounts for audit.
6. Shall contact bus and tour companies in the region and prepare a directory of those that quote most reasonable rates for trips. He/she shall maintain a file on these activities for future use.
7. Shall perform other excursion related activities as needed.

g. Secretary, Web-site & E-Commerce:

The **Secretary, Web-site & E-Commerce** shall be assisted by a deputy secretary who shall be a volunteer or chosen by the secretary.

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1. Shall maintain the HSCSJ Web-site. He/she shall ensure that the various postings are up to date and periodically changed in consultation with the President.

2. Shall explore venues of E-Commerce and help raise funds for HSCSJ.

h. Secretary, Communications & Event Support:

The **Secretary, Communications & Event Support** shall be assisted by a deputy secretary who shall be a volunteer or chosen by the secretary.

1. Shall email all members regarding bi-monthly meetings at the ICC.

2. Shall email all members communications received from other sources beneficial to, or if of interest to our members.

3. Shall forward immediately any matter of concern or action to the President, so that the EC can take prompt and appropriate decisions.

4. Shall provide appropriate support for different events as needed.

Chapter V: AMENDMENTS

A. Constitution

1. Any proposal for the amendment of the constitution shall be presented in writing with names and signatures of at least 20 members to the Executive Council.

2. The Executive Council shall deliberate on the proposal within 2 months of its receipt and finalize its recommendations/comments if any.

3. The Executive Council shall call the General Body meeting giving at least one month's notice for voting on the proposed amendment with their comments.

4. At least one hundred members present during voting shall satisfy the quorum requirement.

5. A three-fourth majority of votes shall be required for adoption of the amendment.

B. By-laws

1. Any proposal for amendment of the by-laws shall be presented in writing with names and signatures of at least ten members to the Executive Council.

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2. The Executive Council shall deliberate on the proposal within two months of its receipt and finalize its recommendations/comments if any.
3. The Executive Council shall call the General Body meeting giving at least one month's notice for voting on the proposed amendment with its comments.
4. At least seventy members present during voting shall satisfy the quorum requirement.
5. A two-third majority of votes shall be required for adoption of the amendment.

Chapter VI: DURATION & DISSOLUTION

1. The duration of the organization shall be PERPETUAL.
2. A resolution to dissolve the organization shall be presented by the Executive Council to the General Body in a session specially called for that purpose.
3. At least 2 months notice shall be given to the General Body for voting on the resolution.
4. A quorum shall consist of one hundred members.
5. A three-fourth majority of votes (of members present) shall be required for adoption of such a proposal.
6. In the event of dissolution (liquidation) of our organization, all the assets of the organization shall be distributed to the Hindu Temple, India Temple Association, Berlin NJ 08009 USA, a religious, nonprofit, tax-exempt organization under section 501(c)(3). If the Hindu Temple does not remain exempt under 501(c) (3) at the time of the dissolution, all the assets shall be distributed to the State of New Jersey for a public purpose.
